

Field Research Corporation Evaluates County of Los Angeles Stormwater Public Education Program

Recently, Field Research Corporation conducted an independent review of the County of Los Angeles' (County) Stormwater Public Education Program. The objective analysis evaluated overall campaign effectiveness and behavior change of County residents, a literature review of common methods utilized by jurisdictions to implement stormwater public education campaigns and outcomes, an assessment of alternative messaging strategies, and recommendations for enhancing the County's stormwater public outreach program during the next phase of the campaign. Additionally, the evaluation provided an overview of social marketing program challenges, new target audience segmentation ideas, and recommendations to enhance the County's program assessment tools.

Below are significant points of interest from this report.

Overall Campaign Effectiveness

The following findings are based on the comprehensive analysis of the County's program assessment methods.

- Every resident survey conducted between 2003 and 2008, except the 2004 survey,

documented some positive change in behavior.

- There have clearly been changes over time in the occurrence of cigarette butts and general littering behaviors of interest to the County, which suggests that the County's campaign to date has been effective.

Literature Review

The review focused on the following components: information related to behavior change recommendations of other campaigns; approaches to target audience selection; positioning, messaging, and outreach strategies; emphasis given to knowledge enhancement; and the use of innovative policy and community level approaches, (e.g. enforcement strategies and neighborhood interventions) by other jurisdictions.

- Simple and focused campaigns are most effective. It is important to focus in on one behavior or group of behaviors at a time.
- Making desired behaviors easy and convenient is often more effective than changing individual knowledge and beliefs.
- Data indicates major gaps in knowledge about the cause and effects of stormwater pollution, gaps that need to be addressed in order to effectively change behaviors.
- Much of the general public attributes stormwater pollution to industry rather than individuals; they are unaware that there are things they can do to help address the problem.
- While there are strong arguments for the need to close the knowledge gap about stormwater pollution, the literature also indicates this may not be enough to cause real behavior change. Environmental attitudes, social norms and beliefs about

Copermittee SPOTLIGHTS

- **The County** fulfilled requests received from 13 copermittee cities for collateral materials and/or to borrow an enviroscape model for events attended during the fourth quarter of FY 2008-09.
- The Cities of Arcadia, Hawthorne, Monterey Park, Rancho Palos Verdes, San Fernando, Signal Hill, South Gate, South Pasadena, and Temple City received web banner public service announcements to post on their City's website.
- The Cities of Redondo Beach and Pasadena are utilizing the Countywide campaign bus shelter ads, modified with their City's contact information, to promote the proper disposal of cigarette butts, dog waste, and trash in their respective Cities.
- A Best Management Practices (BMP) flyer on proper pool and spa maintenance was modified for the City of Hermosa Beach for circulation in their jurisdiction.
- The County's Water Quality Regulations brochure is being modified for the City of West Hollywood to provide residents and contractors with information on water quality regulations for home improvement and construction projects, in English and Spanish versions.

To request stormwater pollution prevention collateral materials, please contact Anna Ho at aho@dpw.lacounty.gov or (626) 458-5966.

- personal responsibility also prove to be powerful determinants of change.
- Weather forecasts have also been suggested as appropriate and effective venues to highlight stormwater pollution and reach large numbers of people.
- All of the successful public outreach campaigns have highlighted public involvement efforts as a key program element; community clean-up efforts and stenciling projects are among the most popular. Another popular type of program is adopt-a-stream programs.
- Literature suggests that coupling educational efforts with some type of enforcement is the best way to promote long term behavior changes.

Messaging Strategies Review

Field Research conducted 26 in-depth individual interviews with County residents. The study was conducted to gather data on the effectiveness of alternative message platforms that might be used in the next phase of the County's campaign. Communication platforms are important as they provide the basic messaging direction for a campaign. Three message platforms commonly used in stormwater campaigns were evaluated: environmental protection; anti-litter; and public health.

- The majority of respondents seem to understand the consequences of stormwater pollution on the ecosystem.
- None of the platforms seemed to clearly communicate to respondents that behaviors of the general public result in more pollution than those of industry.
- The majority of respondents (65%) were unaware of the fact that water from storm drains goes untreated into the waterways, despite the fact that ads in each platform explicitly stated this fact.
- The environmental protection platform tested as the most effective since it capitalized on the current strong interest in the issue.
- The anti-litter and environmental protection platforms tested equally well; however, the anti-litter campaign seems to be more successful in communicating the "big picture" concerning environmental impacts.

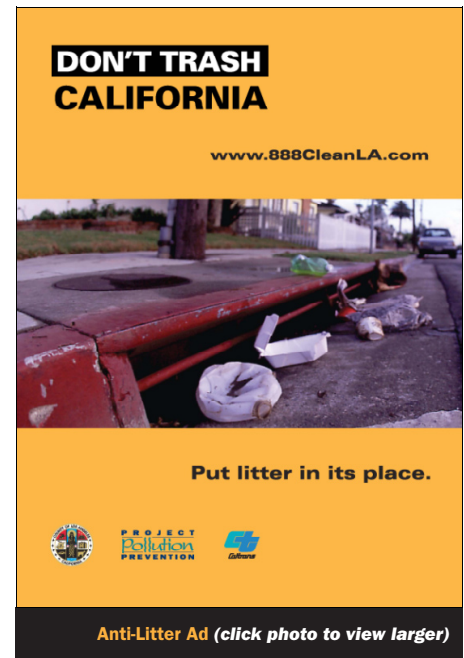
- The strength of the anti-litter platform is its California specific focus as exemplified by the Don't Trash California tagline. This message is viewed as very important and relevant given the amount of litter that people see every day on Los Angeles streets and beaches.
- The current Smith and Jones radio and print public service announcements broadcast by the County in partnership with Caltrans tested very well.
- The public health platform was the least popular primarily because respondents had difficulty accepting its central argument; namely, that stormwater pollution threatens human health.

Recommendations for Next Phase of the County's Stormwater Public Education Program

Some of the recommendations to strengthen the County's campaign as it moves into its next phase include:

- Decrease the list of behavior change requirements in the campaign.
- Develop a criteria or priority list to evaluate polluting behaviors to decide which polluting behaviors to target in upcoming campaigns.
- Develop more impactful public service announcements that emphasize the consequences of engaging in polluting behaviors. The data indicated the County's campaign may need more powerful messages.

- Focus more attention to increase knowledge of County residents about stormwater pollution.
- Increase use of Internet marketing to increase knowledge about stormwater pollution, direct mail options, and other



communication channels that allow for the circulation of more information than public service announcements.

- Consider developing campaign messages that emphasize the "other people do it" slogan. Based on the resident survey analysis, there is a tendency on the part of many residents to view littering and

related practices as things that "only other people do."

- Consider nonpromotional campaigns such as enforcement, community involvement programs, more litter receptacles, and think of creative ways to encourage proper disposal of litter and hazardous materials.

To date, the County's campaign has communicated effective pollution prevention messages as demonstrated by the results of the Field Research independent analysis of the program. Recommendations from Field Research will be utilized to enhance the County's future public education program. ♦

FY 2008-09 Stormwater Program Customer Service Survey Results

In January 2009, the County circulated a Customer Service Survey to copermittees to receive feedback on the services we offered through the Countywide Stormwater Public Education Program. We received 20 survey responses. Results indicate the copermittees rated the

County and previous contractor Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide with an overall above average rating in customer service. We look forward to continue working with you to implement public education programs to comply with the PIPP section of the 2001 NPDES Permit. ♦

Media Campaign with KROQ-FM

As part of the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Public Education Campaign, the County coordinated a media buy with KROQ-FM that aired between June 29, 2009, and August 21, 2009, to promote the proper disposal of cigarette butts. Campaign components of this media buy included radio PSAs, web banner ads, and live web streaming. An added-value amount of approximately \$135,000 was negotiated as part of this media campaign opportunity. ♦



**Millions of butts tossed
in L.A. County every month.**

**Use an ashtray. Don't trash
Los Angeles County!**

www.888CleanLA.com

KROQ Web Banner Ad (click photo to view larger)

October NPDES Copermittee PIPP Meeting Update for July Meeting

The next quarterly NPDES Copermittee PIPP meeting is scheduled on Wednesday, October 28, 2009, at County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works Headquarters, 900 S. Fremont Ave., Alhambra, CA 91803, Conference Room A.

Copermittees can participate in this meeting in person or via webcast and teleconference. For more information, please contact Ms. Anna Ho at (626) 458-5966 or aho@dpw.lacounty.gov. ♦

DON'T TRASH CALIFORNIA

www.888CleanLA.com



Put litter in its place.



**PROJECT
Pollution
PREVENTION**



Anti-Litter Ad

RETURN TO STORY

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**IF YOU THINK
PICKING UP
DOG POOP
IS UNPLEASANT,
TRY DRINKING IT.**

Pet waste washes into storm drains, polluting our rivers, lakes and drinking water sources. Get the scoop.
1-800-CLEAN-UP



Public Health Ad

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Los Angeles River



T **TRASHY** 
CONTENT UNSUITABLE FOR
HUMANS AND MARINE LIFE

Trash thrown on the street can end up in our rivers and ocean.
Put litter in its place. www.888CleanLA.com



PROJECT
Pollution
PREVENTION

DON'T TRASH
CALIFORNIA

Environmental Protection Ad

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A photograph of three discarded cigarette butts lying on a dark, textured surface. The butts are lit, with visible ash and smoke. The background is dark and slightly out of focus.

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